
HOUSE BILL 1938

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Representatives Peterson, Reed, and Nance

Read first time 02/11/25. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating the Washington state flag redesign
2 committee to oversee the process of designing a new state flag;
3 amending RCW 1.20.010; adding a new section to chapter 1.20 RCW;
4 creating a new section; and providing expiration dates.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that the Washington
7 state flag often faces criticism for its poor design and lack of
8 relevance to the state's identity. The flag features a detailed
9 portrait of George Washington, making it overly complex and difficult
10 to reproduce which is a violation of key flag design principles that
11 prioritize simplicity. Additionally, while George Washington is an
12 important national figure, he has limited historical connection to
13 the state itself. This makes his image less meaningful as a symbol
14 for the state.

15 The legislature further finds that the flag fails in other ways
16 aesthetically. It uses too many colors, and its design is essentially
17 a seal on a green background with text. This is widely regarded as an
18 outdated and uninspired approach to flag design. As one of 28 state
19 flags in the United States that showcase a seal on a solid color,
20 Washington's flag lacks distinctiveness and fails to capture the
21 unique character of the state. The current flag, though historically

1 significant, does not resonate with the state's evolving identity.
2 The legislature intends to create the Washington state flag redesign
3 committee that will oversee the process to design and adopt a state
4 flag that symbolizes unity and represents the unique character of the
5 state.

6 This section expires January 1, 2029.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 1.20 RCW
8 to read as follows:

9 (1) The Washington state flag redesign committee is established
10 to oversee the process of designing and adopting a new state flag
11 design that better reflects the diversity and values of all
12 Washingtonians. The committee must approve and adopt one design in
13 accordance with this section by July 1, 2028, that will be the design
14 submitted to the voters under RCW 1.20.010(3).

15 (2) Membership of the committee includes:

16 (a) The director of the Washington state arts commission, or the
17 director's designee, who shall serve as the chair of the committee;

18 (b) Two legislators, one each from the minority and majority
19 caucuses in the senate, appointed by the secretary of the senate;

20 (c) Two legislators, one each from the minority and majority
21 caucuses of the house of representatives, appointed by the chief
22 clerk of the house of representatives;

23 (d) The secretary of state or the secretary's designee;

24 (e) One historian, appointed by the Washington state historical
25 society;

26 (f) Two designers, appointed by the Washington arts commission;

27 (g) Two cultural leaders, appointed by the Washington arts
28 commission;

29 (h) Four tribal representatives, appointed by the affiliated
30 tribes of northwest Indians; and

31 (i) Four citizen representatives from different regions of the
32 state, appointed by the governor.

33 (3) Administrative support for the committee is provided by the
34 Washington arts commission.

35 (4) The committee must:

36 (a) Develop and adopt a new design for the official state flag
37 that accurately and respectfully reflects Washington's shared
38 history, resources, and diverse cultural communities;

1 (b) Solicit public feedback and suggestions to inform its work,
2 by: Participating in outreach to schools, community organizations,
3 and tribes; hosting public forums, virtual discussions, and online
4 surveys to ensure broad participation; and otherwise encouraging the
5 public to submit designs;

6 (c) Review the submitted designs with an eye for creativity,
7 historical relevance, and the ability to represent the state's
8 diverse population and landscapes;

9 (d) Select no more than five designs to move to the final round
10 of public feedback;

11 (e) Adopt, by unanimous vote, the new design that will be
12 included on the ballot of the next general election in accordance
13 with RCW 1.20.010; and

14 (f) By August 1, 2028, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036,
15 submit a report to the legislature and governor that includes:

16 (i) The design of the new flag;

17 (ii) A revised description of the flag to replace the description
18 under RCW 1.20.010;

19 (iii) A description of the symbols and other meanings
20 incorporated in the design; and

21 (iv) Details on the next steps in the process to adopt the new
22 design, including legislation needed to place the new design on the
23 ballot at the next general election in accordance with RCW 1.20.010.

24 (5) The committee may contract with vexillologists and other
25 persons who have either technical or artistic skill in flag
26 construction and design to assist in the work of the committee.

27 (6) This section expires January 1, 2029.

28 **Sec. 3.** RCW 1.20.010 and 2011 c 336 s 7 are each amended to read
29 as follows:

30 (1) The official flag of the state of Washington shall be of dark
31 green silk or bunting and shall bear in its center a reproduction of
32 the seal of the state of Washington embroidered, printed, painted or
33 stamped thereon. The edges of the flag may, or may not, be fringed.
34 If a fringe is used the same shall be of gold or yellow color of the
35 same shade as the seal. The dimensions of the flag may vary.

36 (2) The secretary of state is authorized to provide the state
37 flag to units of the armed forces, without charge therefor, as in his
38 or her discretion he or she deems entitled thereto. The secretary of

1 state is further authorized to sell the state flag to any citizen at
2 a price to be determined by the secretary of state.

3 (3) The official flag of the state of Washington may not be
4 redesigned without conducting a referendum asking voters whether the
5 state should adopt the proposed new design or keep the current
6 design.

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